

## **ARIZONA PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM-BUILDING WORKGROUP**

### **BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION**

Early childhood advocates and professionals have long worked to improve Arizona's early childhood professional development system. Efforts have included the professional development (PD) workgroup of the State School Readiness Board, a workforce registry, the Professional Pathways and T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Education and Compensation Helps) programs, and efforts by community colleges, Arizona Board of Regents (ABOR) universities and the Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children. The following information summarizes professional development system building efforts over the last two years that have culminated in current recommendations regarding the work of the Professional Development System-Building Workgroup.

**Arizona Early Childhood Taskforce:** In May 2011, the Arizona Early Childhood Taskforce (AZ EC Taskforce) convened by the First Things First (FTF) Board released the summary of their 2010 work and recommendations in the report *Ready or School. Set for Life. Creating the Model Early Childhood System*. The report identified a highly skilled and well-compensated workforce as one of six targeted system outcomes and identified developing a professional development system as one of eight priority roles for First Things First to advance within Arizona's early childhood system.

**Creating Strategic Initiatives Unit:** In 2011 First Things First established the Strategic Initiatives (SI) Unit with the primary purpose of advancing new, high-priority initiatives. Consistent with AZ EC Taskforce recommendations, strengthening and expanding Arizona's professional development system is a top SI Unit priority. In February 2012, the SI Unit hired Cathy Kirk, Professional Development System Specialist to staff this SI objective.

**Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge:** From August to October 2011, FTF staff convened partners from across Arizona to develop a high-quality, comprehensive proposal for the Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge federal grant competition. The SI Unit led efforts to develop the professional development sections of the proposal, gathering input from professional development stakeholders and providers across Arizona. This grant opportunity provided a jump start on the work of strengthening and expanding the professional development system. The proposal recommended revising Arizona's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework (also known as a Core Knowledge and Competency document), creating an aligned progression of degrees and credentials from Child Development Associate (CDA) to Associates to Bachelors, and (in the more ambitious and highly funded portion of the proposal) creating a system of PD technical assistance centers, a statewide PD web site, and a comprehensive registry system.

**National Association for the Education of Young Children Professional Development Summit of the States:** From 2008 to 2012, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has convened a national meeting of PD leaders from states across the country. Arizona has sent a delegation every year. Building on the first three years of work, the June 2011 meeting in Rhode Island laid the foundation for the recommendations that became incorporated into Arizona's Race to the Top – Early Learning Challenge proposal, and for the current work of the Professional Development System-Building Workgroup.

## **2012 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM-BUILDING WORK**

**Professional Development System-Building Workgroup (PDSBWG).** The PDSBWG convened in January 2012. Designed to build on the contributions of PD workgroups past and present the PDSBWG includes faculty from Arizona's institutes of higher education, FTF Regional Council members, state agency staff representatives, professional development providers, FTF staff, representatives from philanthropy, and representatives from health and family support services. The workgroup has focused on building a unified vision for the future and exploring the other state's Workforce Knowledge and Competency frameworks. The workgroup is currently an ad hoc FTF working committee and is not a formally recognized Program Committee Advisory Group.

Based on PDSBWG discussions and meetings with several members of the workgroup, the FTF staff recommends using the remainder of calendar year 2012 as a planning phase to develop a two-year work plan that would be implemented 2013 to 2015.

### **PDSBWG Planning Phase Objectives**

1. Develop an actionable 2-year PD System-Building Work Plan that will include the following outcomes:
  - a. A revised Arizona Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework ready to present to the FTF Board by January 2013.
  - b. A plan for developing and implementing an early childhood workforce registry
  - c. A plan for improving alignment and access to early childhood degrees and credentials.
2. Present the PD System-Building Work Plan to the FTF Board in December 2012 or January 2013.
3. Present to the FTF Board a recommendation to establish a Professional Development Advisory Committee that will report to the Program and Policy Committee, including a recommended sub-group structure.

The Planning Phase work will be framed by recently-released guidance from the new National Center on Child Care Professional Development Systems and Workforce Initiatives (PDW Center). Attached to this brief are a list of questions, adapted from the PDW Center guidance that will provide the framework for our planning for the revision of the Work Force and Knowledge Competencies framework.

Concurrent with the workgroup Planning Phase, FTF Strategic Initiative staff will provide an analysis of other states' WFKC framework documents and an environmental scan of professional development in Arizona and across the country.

## **Planning for Change: Guiding Questions for the Revision and Implementation of Arizona's Workforce Knowledge and Competency Framework<sup>1</sup>**

- 1. Where is the authority to create and implement the WFKC framework located?**
  - a. How will the work be done? (How will we structure the PDSBWG to accomplish this work?)
  - b. Who will manage the work?
  - c. What is the timeframe and work plan?
  - d. What cross-agency agreements will need to be in place to effectively implement the WFKC framework?
  - e. What is currently in place to support the work?
  - f. What TA is available? How will we use/access available TA and what role will TA serve in the revision/implementation process?
- 2. How can alignment be ensured with:**
  - a. Other part of the PD system (credentials, career pathways, Quality First, T.E.A.C.H., articulation and institutes of higher education)?
  - b. Other quality improvement efforts (licensing, national standards, early learning guidelines and standards)?
- 3. What funding is required to complete this work?**
  - a. What are the sources of funding and what are the constraints on funding sources (FTF statewide, regional; federal funds – one time, on-going, federal grant opportunities; philanthropy investments)?
  - b. How will implementation and sustainability be funded?
- 4. Who should be involved in the development?**
  - a. What sectors? How to recruit/select?
  - b. What are the barriers to involving multiple sectors and how can the challenges be overcome?
  - c. What roles and specialization areas (adult educators, policymakers, practitioners, researchers, IT, special needs, public schools)?
- 5. How will the WFKC framework be developed?**
  - a. By writing teams or by a single editor/overall writer?
  - b. If teams are used, how will they be formed?
  - c. Will there be writing and research guides and ground rules?
  - d. How will the writing be managed?
  - e. How will other sources (other states, national standards) be incorporated?
- 6. What will be included? What is the conceptual frame for the document?**
  - a. Zero to 5? Zero to grade 3? Zero to grade 8?
  - b. Include health and family support providers?
  - c. Address unregulated through graduate degree providers? Or a more narrow audience?
  - d. Components? Levels? Credentials? System map?

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from National Center on Child Care Professional Development and Workforce Initiatives (2012). *Core Knowledge and Competencies: Considerations*.